

### Genealogical Records

#### 1 Chronicles 4-5

**1 Chronicles 4:1-** *“The sons of Judah were Perez, Hezron, Carmi, Hur, and Shobal.”*

In **1 Chronicles 4:2-23**, we trace a number of Judah’s descendants.

#### Background Notes for 1 Chronicles 4

In 1 Chronicles 1-3 the Messianic line is traced from Adam, through Abraham and David, to the return of the Jews from their captivity in Babylon. That’s as far as the books of Chronicles go, because we believe Ezra was the author of the books, and he lived close to the end of the Old Testament period. The rest of the genealogy of Jesus Christ will be picked up in Matthew, following 400 years of silence during the inter-testamental period.

The first half of 1 Chronicles 4 contains further genealogical records of Judah’s descendants, including the record of Caleb the son of Jephunneh (v15). He and Joshua were the faithful spies at the time of Moses. We also have the record of Othniel, the first judge of Israel (v13). The genealogy of Judah closes in verses 21-23 with more information about Shelah, Judah’s youngest son by his wife. Shelah’s descendants were workers in pottery and linen, and they ruled over Moab in patriarchal times.

The genealogy of the tribe of Simeon is found in the second half of 1 Chronicles 4, from verse 24 to the end of the chapter. The tribe of Simeon did not receive any tribal territory because of Simeon’s participation in the massacre of Shechem (see Genesis 34). Simeon’s descendants lived in villages scattered throughout the tribal area of Judah. Notice the emphasis on the cities and villages of Simeon’s tribe (v31-33).

Later, during the time of King Hezekiah, some in the tribe of Simeon conquered some territory for themselves:

*“These mentioned by name were leaders in their families, and their father’s house increased greatly. So they went to the entrance of Gedor, as far as the east side of the valley, to seek pasture for their flocks. And they found rich, good pasture, and the land was broad, quiet, and peaceful... These recorded by name came in the days of Hezekiah king of Judah; and they attacked their tents and the Meunites who were found there, and utterly destroyed them, as it is to this day. So they dwelt in their place, because there was pasture for their flocks there. <sup>42</sup> Now some of them, five hundred men of the sons of Simeon, went to Mount Seir, having as their captains Pelatiah, Neariah, Rephaiah, and Uzziel, the sons of Ishi: And they defeated the rest of the Amalekites who had escaped. They have dwelt there to this day.”*

Remember, God had commanded King Saul to remove the Amalekites. Read about Saul’s failure to obey in 1 Samuel 15.

#### Doctrinal Point for 1 Chronicles 4

**The Lord answers the prayers of faithful believers in spiritual ministry.**

**1 Chronicles 4:9-10** - *“Now Jabez was more honorable than his brothers, and his mother called his name Jabez, saying, “Because I bore him in pain.” <sup>10</sup> And Jabez called on the God of Israel saying, “Oh, that You would bless me indeed, and enlarge my territory, that Your hand would be with me, and that You would keep me from evil, that I may not cause pain!” So God granted him what he requested.”*

These verses, known as the “Prayer of Jabez,” have become well known in recent years. Verse 9 says that Jabez was an honorable believer. In faith, he called upon God for blessing, and God answered his prayer (v10). Jabez wanted to be happy, and he wanted to enjoy more of the inheritance that God had given His people. He wanted to be kept from evil, and the pain that goes with it.

In application, we too can pray the prayer of Jabez. God wants us to be joyful in Him. And it’s not wrong to ask the Lord to enlarge the area of your service. God has given us “spiritual land” to claim and possess. And the desire to be kept from evil, and the physical and spiritual pain that is involved with evil, should certainly be included in our prayers. The Lord answers the prayers of faithful believers in spiritual ministry.

**Practical Application for 1 Chronicles 4**

**Don’t misapply the “Prayer of Jabez”!**

Unfortunately, some Christians have applied the prayer of Jabez improperly. They have used it as a “proof text” for demanding material prosperity from the Lord. After all, they say, Jabez prayed that his border would be enlarged. Therefore, we can pray for bigger houses and bigger bank accounts. Right?

Wrong! That’s **bad hermeneutics!** The New Testament does not guarantee health and wealth for Christians. But it does guarantee that if you look to the Lord, trust Him and obey Him, you will be blessed! Your **spiritual** borders will be enlarged! You will experience greater effectiveness and blessing for others, and you will enjoy greater insight and appreciation of God’s eternal Word. So don’t be ensnared by the false claims of the “prosperity gospel” preachers.

Don’t misapply the prayer of Jabez!

**1 Chronicles 5:1-2** - *“The sons of Reuben the firstborn of Israel. He was the firstborn, but when he defiled his father’s marriage bed, his rights as firstborn were given to the sons of Joseph, son of Israel; so he could not be listed in the*

*genealogical record in accordance with his birthright. And though Judah was the strongest of his brothers and a ruler came from him, the rights of the firstborn belonged to Joseph.”*

## **Background Notes for 1 Chronicles 5**

Because of his sin of incest (Genesis 35), Reuben lost his birthright as Jacob’s firstborn son. The double portion of the land was given to Joseph’s sons - thus the two tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh. The leadership portion went to Judah. The tribe of Reuben settled on the east side of the Jordan River, south of the tribe of Gad and half the tribe of Manasseh. There was quite an expansion of the tribe of Reuben at the time of King Saul.

A number of the descendants of Reuben are listed in verses 3-8. *“Eastward they settled as far as the entrance of the wilderness this side of the River Euphrates, because their cattle had multiplied in the land of Gilead. Now in the days of Saul they made war with the Hagarites, who fell by their hand; and they dwelt in their tents throughout the entire area east of Gilead” (v9-10).*

Verses 11-22 give us the genealogical record of the tribe of Gad. *“The children of Gad dwelt next to them in the land of Bashan as far as Salcah...”* Skipping down to verse 16: *“The Gadites dwelt in Gilead, in Bashan and in its villages, and in all the common-lands of Sharon within their borders. <sup>17</sup> All these were registered by genealogies in the days of Jotham king of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam king of Israel.*

*<sup>18</sup> The sons of Reuben, the Gadites, and half the tribe of Manasseh had 44,760 valiant men able to bear shield and sword, to shoot with the bow, and skillful in war, who went to war. <sup>19</sup> They made war with the Hagarites, Jetur, Naphish, and Nodab. <sup>20</sup> And they were helped against them, and the Hagarites were delivered into their hand, and all who were with them, for they cried out to God in the battle. He heeded their prayer, because they put their trust in Him. <sup>21</sup> Then they took away their livestock - 50,000 of their camels, 250,000 of their sheep, and 2,000 of their donkeys, and 100,000 of their men; <sup>22</sup> for many fell dead, because the war was God’s. And they dwelt in their place until the captivity.”*

The genealogical record of half the tribe of Manasseh is recorded from verse 23 to the end of the chapter. This half tribe settled on the east side of the Jordan River with the tribes of Reuben and Gad.

## **Doctrinal Point for 1 Chronicles 5**

**The Lord answers the prayers of faithful believers in spiritual warfare.**

The Hagarites were a people group who also lived on the east side of the Jordan River. Psalm 83 says that the Hagarites joined the coalition of enemy forces on the east side of the Jordan River against God’s people.

But the two and a half tribes trusted in the Lord. They prayed, and God answered. God fought for Israel, and a great victory was won!

Notice that principles for victory in spiritual warfare are given here. As the two and a half tribes armed themselves for war (v18), so we should put on the full armor of God that is listed in Ephesians 6. As the 2½ tribes trusted in the Lord and prayed, so we must trust in the Lord, and pray for His deliverance from the evil schemes and the fiery darts of the enemy. As God gave great victory to the two and a half tribes, so God will give His people today great victory in spiritual warfare. The Lord answers the prayers of faithful believers in spiritual warfare.

## Practical Application for 1 Chronicles 5

### Remember the lessons of the 2½ tribes!

The good news is in verses 18-22: the Lord helped them in battle because they trusted Him, and prayed for His help. *“God delivered the Hagrites and all their allies into their hands, because they cried out to him during the battle. He answered their prayers, because they trusted in him” (v20).*

But bad news comes in verses 25-26: *“They were unfaithful to the God of their fathers, and prostituted themselves to the gods of the peoples of the land, whom God had destroyed before them. So the God of Israel stirred up the spirit of Tiglath-Pileser king of Assyria. He carried the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh into exile. He took them to Halah, Habor, Hara, and the river of Gozan to this day.”*

Back in Numbers 32, at the time of the Conquest, the Lord wanted all the tribes of Israel to settle on the west side of the Jordan River. But the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh liked the land on the east side of the river. They didn't want to follow God's perfect will. So by God's permissive will (not God's perfect will), they settled on the east side of the Jordan River. Sadly, that bad decision left those tribes exposed and vulnerable to Assyrian attacks many years later.

There are two lessons from on partial obedience in verses 25-26:

- If we don't obey the Lord completely, we are much more vulnerable to attacks from the enemy of our souls.
- If we live in close proximity to “pagan nations,” we'll be more vulnerable to spiritual adultery with our pagan culture.

The 2 ½ tribes turned away from the Lord, and the Lord allowed them to be conquered and taken into exile. They had to learn the lesson of “you reap what you sow.” If we disobey the Lord, we'll reap what we sow. *“Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows” (Galatians 6:7).* So - remember the lessons of the 2 1/2 tribes!